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10/88

CIRTECH plusRAM memory cards

StatDisk: Better than AppleWorks in ROM

I've always thought it would be neat to have all of the software I regularly use burned into my Apple's ROM memory. That way it would come on instantly, run at the highest possible speed, quietly, and I wouldn't have to keep track of so many disks. People who know about these things would always laugh at me, pointing out how difficult it is to update programs burned into ROM chips--you have to take the computer apart and insert new chips.

The StatDisk changes all that. You can copy, rename, and delete StatDisk files just as if they were stored on any other RAMdisk. But when you turn your computer off and back on again (even two months later), those files are still there--just like with ROM.

And, just like with ROM cards, you can actually unplug the StatDisk from your computer, plug it into another one, and the files will still be there. This opens up all kinds of interesting possibilities for using an Apple II as the "brain" for another device, as a "disk-less" computer for kids or the handicapped, as an unattended computer, or as a magical system of another type.

plusRAM PR-1 and PR-16

CIRTECH's two PR cards are standard-slot memory cards like Applied Engineering's RamFactor or Apple's "Slinky" memory expansion card. This type of card can be used in the II-Plus, IIe, or IIgs. The PR-1 uses standard 256K RAM chips and can be expanded to 1 megabyte. The PR-16 uses standard 1-meg RAM chips and can be expanded to 4 megabytes on one card (with forthcoming 4-meg chips it can be expanded to 16 megabytes).

The more I use the StatDisk the more excited I get about it. The most typical computer user we have around here is my wife. She uses AppleWorks with several Timeout enhancements, APA Manuscript Manager, Talk Is Cheap, and Copy II Plus on an enhanced IIe. For about a year her system included a hard disk. All of her programs were on the hard disk, but for safety she saved all of her files onto floppies as well. That turned out to be a smart move, because the hard disk eventually died.

We replaced it with a 3.5 drive and a 1 meg Ram card. When she turned the computer on, the 3.5 drive would boot and load the RAM card with her software. This took a couple of minutes. Once loaded, however, her programs ran faster and much quieter than they ever had with the hard disk.

Last month I put a 1 meg StatDisk in her IIe and stole the 3.5 drive and RAM card for use elsewhere. She's happier with this system than with either of the others--there's no wait while the RAM card loads. Her software is ready before her monitor has warmed up. AppleWorks responds instantly and silently to commands that, on other machines, cause a pause

and a clatter. She saves her data on 5.25 floppies, just like she always has.

Like most things in life, however, the StatDisk isn't perfect. The static RAM chips it uses have two problems. First, they are more expensive than the dynamic RAM chips other RAMcards use. Second, they are physically larger. (Otherwise, all memory cards would be built like this one.)

Because of the size of the chips, only 512K can be plugged into the main StatDisk card. CIRTECH has a piggy-back expander for the StatDisk that holds as much as another 512K. But the two-card combination requires that the next higher slot in your computer be empty--there's just not enough room for everything.

This is particularly a problem on the IIgs, where the "natural" slot for the StatDisk is slot 7. If you have a card in the IIgs Memory Expansion Slot (doesn't everyone?), only 512K or smaller StatDisks will fit. This may be enough for many people (it's a lot more than will fit on a 5.25 floppy) and it's plenty for AppleWorks or a stripped-down IIgs System Disk. But if you want to put more than 512K of StatDisk in a IIgs, you have to use a slot other than 7. Slots 2 (if you can live without a modem) or 4 (if you can live without a mouse) might work, since slots 3 and 5 are usually empty.

On the IIe and II-Plus, on the other hand, a 1 meg StatDisk will fit into slot 7 without blocking any other slots. This is by far the best slot for a StatDisk on a IIe, anyhow, because it means your computer will automatically start up the software in the StatDisk when you flip on the IIe's power switch.

This is what the future will taste like, but only Apple II owners can enjoy one today.

plusRAM GS-2 and GS-8

CIRTECH's two GS cards are designed to fit into the memory expansion slot on the Apple IIgs. The GS-2 uses standard 256K chips and can be expanded up to 2 megabytes on one card. The GS-8 uses standard 1-meg chips and can be expanded up to 8 megabytes on one card--the maximum RAM capacity of the IIgs. No other company builds a single card that can expand to 8 megabytes using standard RAM chips.

Prices good through October 31, 1988

Cards that use 256K chips:

memory supplied	PR-1.	GS-2	\$
order no	order no	order no	
256K	PR-1-1	GS-2-1	219
512K	PR-1-2	GS-2-2	279
768K	PR-1-3	GS-2-3	339
1 M	PR-1-4	GS-2-4	399
1.25M	---	GS-2-5	459
1.5 M	---	GS-2-6	519
1.75M	---	GS-2-7	579
2 M	---	GS-2-8	639

Cards that use 1-meg chips:

memory supplied	PR-16	GS-8	\$
order no	order no	order no	
1 M	PR-16-1	GS-8-1	499
2 M	PR-16-2	GS-8-2	759
3 M	PR-16-3	GS-8-3	1019
4 M	PR-16-4	GS-8-4	1279
5 M	---	GS-8-5	1539
6 M	---	GS-8-6	1799
7 M	---	GS-8-7	2059
8 M	---	GS-8-8	2319

ROMdisk expansion cards	STAT-256 expansion cards	
(no chips) ROM-256 \$89	64K SD-256-1 \$159	
(no chips) ROM-512 \$89	128K SD-256-2 \$189	
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StatDisk

memory supplied	StatDisk	\$
order no		
128K	SD-1	209
256K	SD-2	269
384K	SD-3	329
512K	SD-4	389
640K	SD-5	519
768K	SD-6	579
896K	SD-7	639
1M	SD-8	699

StatDisk piggyback expander

We've already included this card in the StatDisk prices shown above. This order number is for use only if you want to purchase the board separately.

Unit pricing:

Buy CIRTECH's base card and stock it with your own chips, if you like. Our 256K RAM prices reflect a charge of \$7.50 per chip, installed and tested. Our 32x8 low-power CMOS static RAM prices are \$15.00 per chip, installed and tested.

Unit pricing:

Buy CIRTECH's base card and stock it with your own chips, if you like. Our 256K RAM prices reflect a charge of \$7.50 per chip, installed and tested.

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